



# SEAPORT

NORTH CENTRAL IDAHO: CLEARWATER, IDAHO, LATAH, LEWIS, & NEZ PERCE COUNTIES

## EMPLOYMENT TRENDS

Seaport's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate in November decreased to 3.9 percent from October's rate of 4.2 percent. In November 2002 the rate was 4.8 percent. Despite the decrease in the unemployment rate, *Nonfarm Payroll Jobs* increased slightly in November by 40 from October 2003. Year-over-year there was a significant decrease of 1,050 jobs from November 2002. October's increase in jobs was mainly a result of increases in *Leisure & Hospitality*; however, the increase was slight. Holiday hiring slowed this year with an increase of only 20 jobs in *Retail Trade* from November 2002.

## SPECIAL TOPIC: Area Economic Developments—2003 Clearwater County

- Orofino and Clearwater County will receive \$1 million to address economic losses caused by the annual drawdown of Dworshak Reservoir for fish migration purposes. According to a University of Idaho study, the drawdowns cause short-term losses of up to \$1.35 million in sales each year and the loss of 36 jobs.
- The 2003 fire season had a dual economic impact. Tourism was lost as roads were closed and smoke obscured views. Businesses, whose livelihoods are in the forests, were restricted. On the other hand, even with the loss of tourists, merchants were able to increase sales to fire fighters who needed supplies. Equipment contractors were also able to lease equipment to the U.S. Forest Service to fight fires.
- Tourism associated with chinook salmon fishing is playing a bigger

Seaport Table 1: Labor Force & Employment  
Nez Perce County, Idaho and Asotin County, Washington

	Nov 2003*	Oct 2003	Nov 2002	% Change From	
				Last Month	Last Year
<b>INDIVIDUALS BY PLACE OF RESIDENCE</b>					
<b>Seasonally Adjusted</b>					
Civilian Labor Force	35,620	35,260	34,790	1.0	2.4
Unemployment	1,380	1,470	1,670	-6.1	-17.4
% of Labor Force Unemployed	3.9	4.2	4.8		
Total Employment	34,240	33,790	33,120	1.3	3.4
<b>Unadjusted</b>					
Civilian Labor Force	35,420	34,870	34,590	1.6	2.4
Unemployment	1,330	1,250	1,590	6.4	-16.4
% of Labor Force Unemployed	3.8	3.6	4.6		
Total Employment	34,090	33,620	33,000	1.4	3.3
<b>JOBS BY PLACE OF WORK</b>					
<b>Nonfarm Payroll Jobs** - NAICS</b>	26,330	26,290	27,380	0.2	-3.8
<b>Goods-Producing Industries</b>	4,380	4,410	4,480	-0.7	-2.2
Natural Resources & Mining	180	200	220	-10.0	-18.2
Construction	1,010	1,030	1,100	-1.9	-8.2
Manufacturing	3,190	3,180	3,160	0.3	0.9
Wood Product Manufacturing	560	540	550	3.7	1.8
Food Manufacturing	60	60	90	0.0	-33.3
Paper Manufacturing	1,210	1,220	1,180	-0.8	2.5
Other Manufacturing	1,360	1,360	1,340	0.0	1.5
<b>Service-Providing Industries</b>	21,950	21,880	22,900	0.3	-4.1
Trade, Transportation & Utilities	5,490	5,530	5,550	-0.7	-1.1
Wholesale Trade	610	630	660	-3.2	-7.6
Retail Trade	3,620	3,610	3,600	0.3	0.6
Utilities	90	90	90	0.0	0.0
Transportation & Warehousing	1,170	1,200	1,200	-2.5	-2.5
Information	350	360	390	-2.8	-10.3
Financial Activities	1,600	1,590	1,810	0.6	-11.6
Professional & Business Services	1,400	1,370	1,470	2.2	-4.8
Education & Health Services	3,790	3,770	3,900	0.5	-2.8
Leisure & Hospitality	2,610	2,550	2,640	2.4	-1.1
Other Services	960	970	1,110	-1.0	-13.5
Government Education	2,380	2,320	2,460	2.6	-3.3
Government Administration	2,490	2,550	2,680	-2.4	-7.1
Government Tribes	880	870	890	1.1	-1.1

\*Preliminary Estimate

\*\*Full- or part-time jobs of people who worked for or received wages in the pay period including the 12th of the month

role in the county's economy. River guides and outfitters hosted people from as far away as England, Ireland, and even Japan.

- The build-up to the Lewis and Clark Corps of Discovery bicentennial observance has injected new energy into Clearwater County. A re-enactment of the historical meeting in 1805 between the Corps of Discovery and the Nez Perce Indians was played out in May.
- Orofino's new \$2 million business park building was opened. Two tenants signed leases. The first company to sign a lease

was, Architectural Signs and Engraving Inc. (ASE), a company that specializes in Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) signs and other specialty signs. The company has customers throughout the United States, is locally owned, and will occupy half of the building. The other tenant will be Seismic Tech, a company that produces earthquake safety valves, which cut off the flow of natural gas and propane to homes and businesses during unexpected ground movements. Seismic Tech delayed operations because new manufacturing equipment didn't test out to specifications and was sent back to suppliers.

- Orofino's Clearwater Valley Hospital, the only emergency room in the 112-mile span between Lewiston, Idaho, and Missoula, Montana, received \$500,000 to expand the emergency room.
- The Orofino Airport received a \$150,000 grant from the Federal Aviation Administration for airport improvements.

#### **Idaho and Lewis Counties**

- Syringa General Hospital in Grangeville broke ground in June on a \$240,000 ambulance shed and community meeting room. The building will be 3,600-square feet including a 1,000-square-foot classroom/meeting room. The hospital also acquired a helical computed tomography (CT) system from Toshiba Medical Systems. The equipment allows more exams to be done in Grangeville rather than sending a patient on to Lewiston or elsewhere.
- Most lumber mills in both counties dropped down to running a single shift in the first half of 2003 before rebounding in the last half. Mill owners blamed reductions in timber sales from federal forests and low prices for finished lumber. Prices for finished lumber rebounded in the last half of 2003 and multiple shifts were restored.
- Officials at Bennett Forest Industries considered moving their mills at Elk City and Grangeville to the Lewiston-Clarkston Valley. However, that decision was put on hold due to a rebound of higher prices for lumber.
- Nearly \$1.3 million in federal funds was awarded to several infrastructure projects in Idaho and Lewis Counties that will benefit eco-

nomie development. The grants included \$77,060 for improvements to the Tahoe emergency services facility and \$144,668 to construct a new community center in Greencreek. Stites will receive \$500,000 to connect the town into the Kooskia wastewater system. White Bird will also receive \$500,000, which will be used for water system improvements.

- According to a report by the Idaho Fish and Wildlife Foundation, the 2003 salmon season was worth \$90 million to the Idaho economy. Locally salmon fishing resulted in more than \$3 million in spending in Kooskia. The town of Riggins benefited the most in the state with \$10.1 million in direct spending by individuals because of fishing.
- Nearly \$.25 million in federal, state, and local funding was granted toward general maintenance improvements at the Idaho County Airport in Grangeville.
- The Benedictine Sisters at the Monastery of St. Gertrude near Cottonwood are planning a building and renovation project. "The number of people who come each year to the monastery for retreat and spiritual rest has nearly doubled since 1999," said Sister Lalande. The new spirituality and retreat center will include meeting and conference rooms, office space, and several bedrooms for guests.
- A new trip down old railroad tracks has gained interest. The six tunnels hollowed through the rock canyon walls have seen few people in the last 45 years, but a new tourist company has teamed up with BG&CM Railroad to add tourism to the line. The new company plans to use 15-passenger vans with hi-rail capability to take passengers on the line.

#### **Latah County**

- The Pullman-Moscow Regional Airport Board is looking closely at plans that could lead to a new business development park at the airport.
- University Pointe, a retail and professional building on Sixth Street in Moscow, was completed in June.
- Officials at the University of Idaho (UI) say world events, such as the 9-11 attacks and the recent war in Iraq, have led to more federal money being directed to homeland security and

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defense research. UI's federal funding for 2003 is estimated to be at about \$63.1 million; that's up from \$48.9 million from 2002. The UI's total research funding was approximately \$77 million for 2003.

- UI researchers will use a NASA grant of nearly \$1 million to develop ultra-low-power computer chips for use in space. It's another coup for UI professor Gary Maki, whose work in space electronics has led to more than \$27 million in government contracts over two decades.
- Gritman Medical Center in Moscow is in the middle of a 48,000-square-foot \$19 million addition.
- Tourism on the Palouse (Latah County and Whitman County) is a much larger industry than most realize, accounting for more than \$66 million in economic impact annually. University events are a large part of the annual tourism dollars. As home to two universities, UI and Washington State University (WSU), the Palouse attracts tens of thousands of visitors. The WSU athletic department indicates that during a PAC-10 football weekend, more than \$1.4 million is spent, giving local businesses a boost. In recent estimates the Lionel Hampton Jazz Festival at the UI brought in more than \$4 million in economic impact.

#### **Nez Perce and Asotin Counties**

- If all goes as planned, the Asotin County aquatics center should open next summer on Dustan Loop in Clarkston. The outdoor water park will feature three slides, a wave pool, a lazy river, and an adventure pool. The indoor complex will include an eight-lane competition pool, a warm water pool, and a whirlpool. The entire project is expected to cost about \$9.4 million.
- Potlatch Corporation reported profits in the first half of 2003 following three years of losses.
- Potlatch Corporation transferred 12 of 2,000 jobs in Lewiston to the Midwest. The transfers are a part of a decision by Potlatch to open a new site in the Midwest where tissue will be cut into household towels. The number of converting lines in Lewiston will drop by one to 20 in January when the change is completed.
- Lewis-Clark State College broke ground in August on a 3,500-seat multipurpose activity center to replace the aging 1,400-seat Warrior Gymnasium. The \$16.4 million, 100,000-square-foot project is expected to take two years and will be built in two phases. The completed center will have three full-sized basketball courts, weight-training rooms, seven classrooms, and the capacity to house large sporting and entertainment events.
- A new road was opened in September in Lewiston's Business and Technology Park marking the completion of infrastructure at the site.
- Five of the eight manufacturers of aluminum boat manufacturers in the area have order backlogs. Since 2000, the number of people employed in boat manufacturing in the Lewiston-Clarkston Valley has climbed by 41 to 211. Although those jobs represent just 6.5 percent of the manufacturing jobs, they're important because boat making is one of the few sectors of manufacturing that's growing in the area. Many of those working for boat manufacturers are welders, a trade with average wages of \$13.50 per hour in this area.
- Regence BlueShield of Idaho has cut claims processing and customer service jobs in Lewiston. The company announced they are delaying plans to construct what would be one of Lewiston's largest office buildings at the city's business and technology park.
- The Pacific Cataract and Laser Institute opened a new, larger building at Bryden Canyon Road and Fourth Street in Lewiston.
- Citing inefficiency at the Port of Portland in the wake of the longshoremen's work stoppage, Potlatch Corporation shifted the bulk of its shipping business to the Puget Sound, bypassing the Port of Lewiston, and the Snake and Columbia Rivers.

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